BOOKS AND AUTHORS — REVIEWS AND COMMENT

A Book as a Xmas Gift

If Well Chosen Books Increase in Value and Interest with Each Succeeding Day, and Every Book Is the Nucleus of a Possible Library.

This is the season of books par excellence. Enter any bookstore in the city and be convinced. Books are living companions if once one begins to cultivate their acquaintance. Theirs is an infinite variety that nothing can stale. The taste for reading, once formed, is a pleasure of life that endures to the end.

BUY BOOKS, READ BOOKS, GIVE BOOKS!

And books are an inexpensive pleasure, the most easily attainable luxury of modern civilization. Their cost bears no relation to their value. One can have the best, the highest that human wisdom, knowledge, imagination has written for a few cents. All that may be had in finest dress of paper, type and binding, but it is to hand, modestly, on any book counter. Too many respect literature at a distance, as something solemn, to be approached with much worshipful preparation. In reality it is a friendly, an intimate art, ready to ingratiate itself if only one will open its pages. Don't treat literature too seriously; consider it as you consider the drama, an evening's relaxation from the work of the day.

CONSULT THE BOOKSELLER WHO KNOWS HIS WARES.

Those who enter bookstores only on festive occasions should consult the bookseller. Habitual book buyers need not be told. Don't look for keys to a dark mystery. The field of literature may be approached from any side. You can link your reading to your newspaper, your magazine—trace what interests you in the news of the day to its sources. You can approach poetry through the Elizabethans or Noyes, Masefield, Masters; or you can make a beginning with Tennyson, the Brownings and Whittier. It does not matter whether you begin in fiction with Bret Harte or Dickens or Trollope, or start with the moderns, with Mrs. Wharton, Winston Churchill, Wells, Ernest Poole, or Mr. Howells, that master delineator of nineteenth-century American life in transformation.

HAVE BOOKS IN RESERVE IN YOUR HOUSE!

Wait for the mood, the opportunity. Have books within reach even though your interests lie elsewhere. These may fail you on some rainy day or stormy evening, in days of convalescence. The occupants of your shelf will patiently await their time. They ask no more than to be an added interest in your existence. Buying books without a definite intention of reading them, or with the vague one of reading them "some time"—buying them merely as inexpensive and most decorative furnishings, even, is a good habit. For few can live with books without coming under their influence, without learning to appreciate their resources in some degree, however slight. And even in the least bookish family there is always one member who is born with the blessed taste for reading, whether it be a taste for fiction and poetry or a thirst for knowledge. And there are very few books that do not satisfy both.

BOOKS FOR ALL AGES, ALL TASTES, ALL PURSES.

In these practical days, returns on investments are so much considered and discussed that

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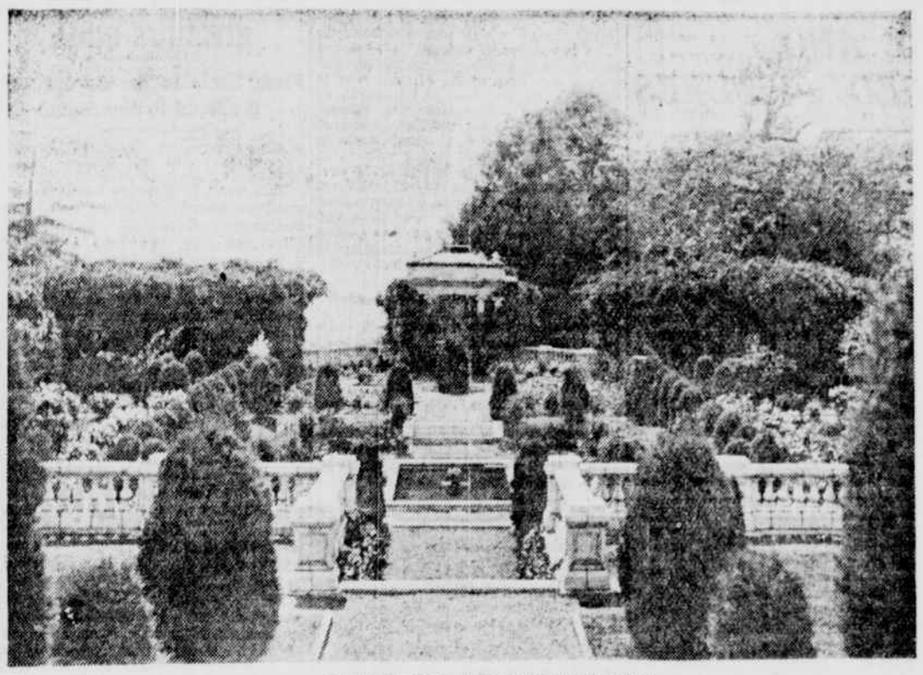

BLYTHEWOOD, HARRISON-ON-HUDSON.
(From "Beautiful Gardens in America"; Charles Scribner's Sons.)

CHRISTMAS BOOKS: A GENERAL SURVEY

American Leaders in Biography, Travel, Belles-Lettres and Fiction—Illustrated Books—Architecture.

The Christmas "gift" book is passing, the book specially, and often artistically, made for the mere purpose of being given away, looked at and admired but not read, and then placed on the shelf to lumber the room of its betters. Handsome books we still have for the holiday season, but almost invariably now it is their contents that count; splendor of binding and illustration, of type and paper, are no longer wasted upon trash. Who measures his gifts by their cost can still be accommodated in our bookstores; only, *nolens volens*, he must buy better books, and can get more of them for the allotted sum. He may be a stranger in a bookstore during all the other weeks of the year, names and titles may mean nothing to him—he needs must buy better books. The salesman will see to it, if he will only ask his advice and follow it.

A selection from the simply bound, well-printed, inexpensive Everyman's Library will be a more welcome gift to the booklover than a folio edition of one of our great poets, who needs not the embellishment of colored illustrations, morocco binding, red rubrics and a desert of margin to a disproportionately slender type-page. There are really beautiful, dignified specimens of the printer's art to be had from the Merrymount Press and the Riverside Press, worthy settings of worthy books. There are, if one be inclined to plunge, publications that are necessaries of life to many whose purse is slender—the "Encyclopædia Britannica," for instance, which is now issued in two editions of vastly varying prices, the only difference between them being that of size of page and type. There is the new edition of the "New International Encyclopædia," sixteen of whose twenty-four volumes have already been issued. In his book on America H. G. Wells observed that a dictionary of the English language is with us a household article, and not, as in Europe, a luxury rarely found in private houses. And here is another hint for the Christmas shopper in a bookstore—the Century, the Standard in many editions, from the unabridged downward, in all sizes and prices for all kinds of purposes. Christmas is, above all, the season in which to get away from "the latest" unless it is worthy. There is the Home University Library for those of studious inclinations; and there is the Wayfarers' Library for good light reading. There are the tools of the trade for youngsters beginning author: Soulé's "Synonyms," Edwin Hamlin Carr's most helpful "The Happy Phrase," and, of course, Bartlett's "Familiar Quotations" in its new, much expanded edition by Nathan Haskell Dole. There are guides for young poets—even vers librists may profit by them—for budding dramatists, for picture play writers. And there is the whole field of literature from "The Canterbury Tales" to the "Spoon River Anthology" and "North of Boston," from Defoe and Fielding to Mrs. Cather's "The Song of the Lark," which, when all is said and done, is likely to be adjudged the best American novel of a year that has produced so much of excellent native fiction.

THE YEAR'S FICTION.

Elsewhere will be found a classified list of the year's leading books in different departments of literature. Most of them have already been reviewed or commented upon in these columns. One of the latest of them, Frances Hodgson Burnett's "The Lost Prince," scarcely needs comment. It will inevitably and rapidly make its way into public favor, for, even more than "Little Lord Fauntleroy," it appeals to readers of all ages. It will fascinate children, it will charm their elders with its supremely able knightly romance of the long ago set in the prosaic environment of to-day. Such books as Ernest Poole's "The Harbor," Mr. Harrison's "Angela's Business," Booth Tarkington's "The Turmoil," Gouverneur Morris's graceful "Seven Darlings," Arthur Stringer's "The Prairie Wife," Dorothy Canfield's "The Bent Twig," Stewart Edward White's "The Grey Dawn" and Kathleen Norris's "Story of Julia Page" only need to be named. The late F. Hopkinson Smith's "Felix O'Day" holds second place in "The Bookman's" list of best-selling fiction during November. Gene Stratton-Porter's "Michael O'Halloran" holds the first, Mary Roberts Rinehart's "K" the third, Gilbert Parker's "The Money Master" is fourth and Rex Beach's "Heart of the Sunset" fifth.

From England we have had in the course of the year, among many others, two novels by H. G. Wells, the farcical "Bealby" and the serious "Search Magnificent" Anthony Hope has given us "A Young Man's Year"; Maurice Hewlett, "The Little Iliad"; Oliver Onions, "Mushroom Town"; W. Somerset Maugham, "Of Human Bondage"; Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch that delightful comedy of the war in Cornwall, "Nicky-Nan, Reservist"; Joseph Conrad, "Victory"; Eden Phillpotts, "Old Delabole"; Stephen Pryce, "David Penstephen," his best book thus far; and Arnold Bennett has concluded his trilogy of the Five Towns with "These Twain."

A new boom for Russian fiction has been started. The old masters are being issued in new and for the first time altogether competent translations; and the new generation is fully represented in the fall lists of our publishers. Introductions to this literature are available, Kropotkin's book in a new edition, with one of Melchior de Vogué's "The Russian Novel" soon to follow. Maurice Baring's little work on the same subject deserves mention, as does, also, his "The Russian People." Stephen Graham has just added to his revealing books on the country and its people "The Way of Mary and the Way of Martha," a comparative study of Eastern and Western Christianity.

NEW BIOGRAPHIES.

It is not only in fiction that America is well to the fore this year in literature. The best of the new biographies are of Americans, American women being notably well represented. There are lives of Julia Ward Howe, Clara Barton and Fanny Crosby; and there is Dr. Anna Howard Shaw's own cheerful "Story of a Pioneer." "The Life and Letters of John Hay" takes first place among the biographies of American men. Then we have the life of Bishop Potter, William Dean Howells's "Tales of My Youth," Dr. Lyman Abbott's Reminiscences, and, promised for immediate publication, an authorized biography of Booker T. Washington. From England we have little of first class importance except "Emma Darwin: A Century of Family Letters," which is very important indeed. And from Russia comes Gorki's frank "My Childhood," a book far greater than any of his fiction so far, though in it will be found the origins of many of his tales.

The Infanta Eulalia's democratic "Court Life from Within" in many of Europe's capitals is an entertaining volume, comprehensively timely, but most delightful in its sketches of the simple democracy of the Scandinavian courts. With this may be named Princess Radziwill's "The Royal Marriage Market of Europe," a "book of romances and tragedies," in which figure all the reigning families—Hapsburgs and Hohenzollerns, Hanoverians and Romanovs, the Bourbons of Spain, the house of Savoy, the Coburgs of Belgium and Bulgaria and, until recently, of Portugal, the Hohenzollerns of Rumania and many others. The Serbian Princess Lazarovitch, an American by birth, tells of her life in London, where she made her début as an actress, and of the interesting personages of the late Victorian era whom she met there—Lord Randolph Churchill, Lady Jeune, "the Souls" and many others. And those adventurously inclined may turn to such earlier books of the year as Anne Topham's "Memories of the Kaiser's Court." The many revelations of English governesses in German princely houses and the like may be read for amusement if not for their authenticity. They contain, at least, much of the current gossip of European capitals.

The record would not be complete without mention of some books on the war by American women. First among them, a book of infinite charm, a romance of the tragedy, we have Mildred Aldrich's "A Hilltop on the Marne"; Edith Wharton's "Fighting France" is notable for its artistry, if also for its unrestrained bitterness toward the invaders. Three American delegates to the recent international women's peace congress at The Hague—Jane Addams, Emily G. Balch and Alice Hamilton—have chronicled their impressions and the results of their work in "Women at The Hague"; Mabel T. Boardman, the chairman of the National Relief Fund of the American Red Cross, has written a complete account of the history, organization, present activities, needs, hopes and possibilities of the international societies "Under the Red Cross Flag." And, last but not least, there is Lillian D. Wald's own story of her increasing social service, "The House on Henry Street."

TRAVEL AT HOME.

In the new books of travel even more than in current biography America comes first this year. Making a virtue of necessity, our professional globe trotters have travelled at home, and, as Mr. and Mrs. William Hale ingenuously confess in the title of their book, "We Discover New England," they have discovered their own country. There is the cheerful "In Vacation America," North and South and East, in winter and summer, with its many backward glances to fifty years ago, when Saratoga was the height of fashion, with memories even of the days before the war in the South. John Muir's posthumous "Travels in Alaska" deserves mention here, together with S. Hall Young's "Alaska Days with John Muir." "Old Concord" and Francis E. Leupp's "Walks Around Washington," both with drawings by Lester G. Hornby, deserve consideration. And so does Sarah Comstock's "Old Roads from the Heart of New York," received here to-day. Bostonians and all who know Boston will be interested in "The Boston of Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes," compiled from his writings.

ART AND ARTISTS.

Such books as Louise Shelton's "Beautiful Gardens in America," Harold Donaldson's "The Architecture of Colonial America," John Martin Hammond's "Quaint and Historic Forts of North America," Robert A. Lancaster's "Historic Virginia Homes and Churches" combine the interests of American travel and American art. The artistic features of the Panama-Pacific Exposition are being dealt with in an increasing number of more or less elaborately illustrated volumes, listed elsewhere; and this is as good a place as any for a reference to Anne Hollingsworth Wharton's "English Ancestral Homes of Noted Americans."

Mr. Brangwyn's "Book of Bridges," with its unusually fresh and suggestive accompaniment of text, is dealt with in another column. Belgium receives its share of attention in picture and word. And, for the rest, there are the late Arthur Hoeber's "The Barbizon Painters," and a volume on Vigée Lebrun which reaches us from England through a Boston publishing house. We may learn "What Pictures to See in America." And George F. Kuntz follows up his last year's "Curious Lore of Jewels" with a volume on "The Magic of Jewels and Charms" and also gives us a book on ivory in art, "Ivory and the Elephant."

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

Lafcadio Hearn's "Interpretations of Literature," his lectures at the Imperial University of Tokio, is one of the welcome surprises of the autumn season. The year has been prolific in critical studies of living authors, George Bernard Shaw at their head. The letters of Washington Irving to Henry Brevoort are a titbit for amateurs; and a new life of Tennyson, by the late Professor Thomas R. Lounsbury, promises to be worth while, since it is based on new material. The poets we have with us in increasing numbers. The latest addition to the list is "The Collected Poems of Rupert Brooke," the young Englishman who died fighting for his country.

It is worth noting that in the year of Waterloo Napoleonic literature has been eclipsed by a war far greater than any the Corsican ever waged. Some books dealing with him have been published during the year, but have been received with indifference. The latest of them, "In the Footsteps of Napoleon," claims consideration, however. The issue of the third and fourth volumes of a new six-volume English translation of exceptional merit of the "Memoirs of the Duke de St. Simon" may also be noted. There is Hilaire Belloc's "High Lights of the French Revolution"; a history of "The Partitions of Poland" is timely again, and Beatrice A. Lees's "Alfred the Great" recommends itself by its sterling qualities.

In American history there is, first of all, the "Riverside History of the United States," in four volumes, worth recommending. Charles H. Sherrill's "French Memories of Eighteenth Century America" is filled with pictures of the life of our ancestors; and the man who probably knows the Indian best, George Bird Grinnell, has written the story of "The Fighting Cheyennes."

There is no dearth of books for holiday giving. A diminution of the quantity of new publications has only served to raise the quality of those available for the purpose.

THE AMERICAN SCENE: PRESENT AND PAST

American Homes Past and Present—East, South and West Beautiful Gardens—Remodelled Farmhouses—Picturesque New York and Its Storied Places.

HERE AND THERE.

THE ARCHITECTURE OF COLONIAL AMERICA. By Harold Donaldson Eberlein. Illustrated from photographs. 8vo, pp. vii, 289. Boston: Little, Brown & Co.

REMODELLED FARMHOUSES. By Mary H. Northend. With numerous illustrations. 8vo, pp. xiv, 284. Boston: Little Brown & Co.

STATELY HOMES OF CALIFORNIA. By Porter Garnett. Introduction by Bruce Porter. Illustrated. 8vo, pp. xix, 95. Boston: Little, Brown & Co.

OLD ROADS FROM THE HEART OF NEW YORK. Journeys To-day by Ways of Yesterday. By Sarah Comstock. With 100 Illustrations. 8vo, pp. xxiv, 401. G. P. Putnam's Sons.

BEAUTIFUL GARDENS IN AMERICA. By Louise Shelton. With 8 full-page color reproductions and 170 photographs. 8vo. Charles Scribner's Sons.

Many tomes have been written on the subject of our Colonial architecture; its best examples have been made known to us in elaborate illustrations; it lives around us in the adroit use made of its beauty and dignity by contemporary architects; it is a topic whose interest is inexhaustible. Mr. Eberlein's book is not merely still another volume on the subject. It is a complete study of the art in all its changing forms and transmutations as it evolved locally in New England, New York and Dutch New Jersey, the Middle States and the South. This is a book of differentiations, of nuances even, tracing, also, the influence of time and place and social and economic conditions upon the arrangement and the development of the home. A book for architects, but, above all, a book for the layman who takes an intelligent interest in one of the great artistic heritages of his country. Mr. Eberlein ends his book with a consideration of the classic influence which came to us from France, and which was so much more successful in our public than in our private buildings. And he adds a final chapter on American architects. An informing book, pleasantly written, and, of course, filled with pictures that alone make its possession worth while.

What has been done, what can be done by a good architect with an old farmhouse is illustrated by concrete instances—twenty of them—in Miss Northend's book. The possibilities are endless, especially where the basis of transformation is a sound Colonial structure. In fact, looking at some of the pictures in this volume one wonders that anything so simple as a farmhouse has furnished the foundation for these elaborate and beautiful country residences. Of course, when once one has restored or remodelled according to period, the next step is furnishings and furniture in keeping. Thus the interiors here shown suggest the hunt for the antique—Hepplewhite and Sheraton and Chippendale, William and Mary escritoires, four-post bedsteads, all the delights of beautiful possessions in keeping with the house. This, too, is one of those enticing volumes whose illustrations inevitably compel to a reading of the romantic text. For can there be a better, more enduring romance than that of making the past live anew in the present in one's most intimate environment?

No greater contrast to Colonial and Georgian architecture could possibly be found than that illustrated in Mr. Garnett's book. In California Nature bids the architect to do her bidding. These descriptions are, therefore, first of all, devoted to the parks and gardens in which these stately homes are built. As for their style, there is a little of everything—a hint of the missions, a great deal of the Spain of the Moors, considerable borrowing from classic Greece and Rome, with here and there an example of Elizabethan and, of course, the omnipresent Renaissance. On the whole, these houses are adapted to their environment, to vegetation and sunshine and blue sky—whence the use of colors and tints on outer walls. California is evolving an architecture of its own, but thus far it has been, one believes, more successful in the building of simpler residences than in the palaces here depicted.

Sarah Comstock's book should be in the hands of every New Yorker who loves New York. Its itineraries within a radius of thirty miles around the city will reveal to them a wealth of historic interest for outings innumerable. We all know the Van Cortlandt house, of course, and the Philipse Manor house, the Jumel mansion and Fraunces's Tavern, the City Hall, the Poe cottage—but how many of us have ever visited the Billop house, the Perrine homestead, the Garibaldi house under its protective roof, or the original Vanderbilt homestead on Staten Island? Where is the old Lefferts homestead? And where did Baron Steuben entertain George Washington? Did you know that the Stone House in which André was imprisoned at Tappan is still in existence? Have you seen the Featherstone House, where Washington and Rochambeau conferred, and where the British guide hid in the currant bushes? How much do you not know of the historical sites and houses and monuments in and around New York? Read this book, and be enlightened. You can start on your pilgrimages on any clear, crisp Sunday morning, and benefit thereby in body and mind. Or, if you prefer it, you can light your lamp at night and ramble in your armchair from the New Amsterdam that was to the New York that is, even to the utmost confines of its urban influence. And the illustrations will be of greatest help to you.

"Beautiful Gardens in America" is a pure delight, a holiday book for every day of the year, a thing of beauty. The illustrations fully justify the title, the range from which they are taken is American in the full sense of the word, representing all our climatic zones, and the text is helpful and suggestive. Indeed, the volume comes at the right time, when the art of gardening has attained its true place in our scheme of living.

IRVING'S NEW YORK

A Sumptuous Edition of One of Our Humorous Classics.

A HISTORY OF NEW YORK FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE WORLD TO THE END OF THE DUTCH DYNASTY. By Diedrich Knickerbocker. The Whole Embellished by Eight Pictures from the Hand of Maxfield Parrish, Esqre. Large 8vo, pp. xii, 299. Dodd, Mead & Co.

This handsome edition of the Knickerbocker History of New York was first published fifteen years ago, and long since went out of print. Its reissue to-day is welcome, for it is as fine a piece of bookmaking as has been produced in this country. Its font of type is gracefully simple and restful to the eye, the large type-page is noticeably well-balanced; in short, in every typographical detail the book is thoroughly artistic.

So much has been written about the Knickerbocker History that little remains to be said at this late date. Planned originally as a brief satire on a highfalutin guide-book of New York of the period, it grew in the author's hands to its final proportions. That its humor was misunderstood, that it was taken seriously for many years after its appearance, that America at large accepted it as a true picture of the Dutch in this country long after Irving had written his apology in 1848—all this is sufficiently well known, as is also the fact that the author's tardy apology was called forth by the persistent protests of New Yorkers of Dutch descent, who yet accepted, if they did not themselves assume, from its title-page, and collective name of Knickerbockers. Indeed, to the very sting of the satire may be traced that pride of Dutch traditions in New York which has firmly fixed them in American history.

"I will say this in further apology for my work," wrote Irving in 1848, "that if it has taken an unwarrantable liberty with our early provincial history it has at least turned attention to that history and provoked research. It is only since this work appeared that the forgotten archives of the province have been rummaged and the facts and personages of the olden time rescued from the dust of oblivion. Before the appearance of my work the popular traditions of our city were unrecorded; the peculiar and racy customs and usages derived from our Dutch progenitors were unnoticed, or regarded with indifference, or reverted to with a sneer. Now they form a convivial currency, and are brought forward on all occasions; they link our whole community together in good humor and good fellowship; they are the rallying points of home feeling, the seasoning of our civic festivities, and are so harped upon by our writers of popular fiction that I find myself almost crowded off the legendary ground which I was the first to explore."

The reference to the popular novelists of nearly seventy years ago recalls the now forgotten Knickerbocker School, which deserves attention only as the first "society fiction" produced in this country. It is preserved in the Duyckinck collection at the New York Public Library.

Concluding his apology in the vein of the work that called it forth, Irving declared: "When I find its very name become a household word, and used to give the home stamp to everything recommended for popular acceptation, such as Knickerbocker societies, Knickerbocker insurance companies, Knickerbocker steamboats, Knickerbocker omnibuses, Knickerbocker bread and Knickerbocker ice; and when I find New Yorkers of Dutch descent priding themselves on being 'genuine Knickerbockers'—I please myself with the persuasion that I have struck the right chord."